

Message Text

PAGE 01 STATE 168090

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TO MULTI COMMERCIAL ADDRESSEES

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FOL REPEAT STATE 168090 JULY 17, 1975

QUOTE

UNCLAS STATE 168090

E.O. 11652, N/A

TAGS: SREF

SUBJECT: HOUSE IMMIGRATION SUBCOMMITTEE STATEMENT

1. FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF MRS. TAFT'S OPENING STATEMENT TO
BE MADE BEFORE HOUSE IMMIGRATION SUBCOMMITTEE ON THURSDAY
JULY 17, 1975: QUOTE.

MR. CHAIRMAN, I AM PLEASED TO REPORT CONTINUING
PROGRESS IN OUR EFFORTS TO AID AND RESETTLE THE VICTIMS OF
THE RECENT UNFORTUNATE EVENTS IN INDOCHINA. THE RESULTS
ACHIEVED TO DATE, WITH THE PRESIDENT'S LEADERSHIP AND THE
SUPPORT OF THE CONGRESS, THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR, AND THE
AMERICAN PEOPLE GIVE US REASON TO BE CONFIDENT THAT THE
RESETTLEMENT PROGRAM IS ON-TRACK AND PROCEEDING AT A
SATISFACTORY RATE TOWARDS OUR GOAL.

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 STATE 168090

OVER 56,000 OF SOME 130,000 REFUGEES HAVE NOW LEFT THE
RESETTLEMENT CENTERS FOR NEW HOMES, MORE THAN NINETY PER-
CENT OF WHICH ARE IN THE UNITED STATES.

WE WANT TO RESIST THE TEMPTATION TO GAUGE THE SUCCESS OF OUR PROGRAM SOLELY BY STATISTICS. GOALS ARE IMPORTANT, BUT OUR PRIMARY GOAL MUST TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION THE NEEDS AND ASPIRATIONS OF THE REFUGEES. WE CANNOT AFFORD TO RUN A PLACEMENT SYSTEM WITH ASSEMBLY LINE PRECISION WHICH MAY OVERLOOK THE RESOLUTION OF PROBLEMS WHICH AFFECT LIVES IN A MOST PROFOUND WAY.

THE WORK OF THE VOLUNTARY RESETTLEMENT AGENCIES ASSOCIATED WITH US IS INDICATIVE OF HUMAN COMPASSION, AND WE ARE PLEASED WITH THEIR PERFORMANCE, PARTICULARLY CONSIDERING THE SHORT PERIOD OF TIME THEY HAD TO PREPARE FOR SUCH A LARGE SCALE OPERATION AS THIS IS. WE HAVE BEEN ASSURED THAT THE VOLUNTARY AGENCIES HAVE THE CAPABILITY OF PLACING A TOTAL OF 104,000 PERSONS WITH SPONSORS BEFORE THE END OF THE YEAR.

WE ARE SUPPLEMENTING THE IMPRESSIVE PERFORMANCE OF THESE AGENCIES BY ENCOURAGING STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS TO SPONSOR REFUGEES. THE STATES OF WASHINGTON AND MAINE HAVE BOTH DEVELOPED SUCH PROGRAMS AND ARE NOW RESETTLING REFUGEES WITHIN THEIR JURISDICTIONS. WE ARE ENCOURAGED BY THE RESPONSE WE HAVE RECEIVED FROM A NUMBER OF STATES, CITIES AND COUNTIES, AND HOPE THAT THE GENEROSITY AND INTEREST THEY HAVE EXPRESSED WILL BE CONTAGIOUS.

GENERALLY, OFFERS OF SPONSORSHIP APPEAR TO BE ENTERING A NEW PHASE. WHILE THE NUMBER OF OFFERS FROM INDIVIDUALS IS DECLINING, CIVIC ORGANIZATIONS AND GROUPS ARE VOLUNTEERING TO SPONSOR INCREASING NUMBERS OF PEOPLE. GIVEN THE HEAVY RESPONSIBILITIES OF SPONSORSHIP, WE ARE HAPPY TO SEE THIS DEVELOPMENT. IN THE LONG RUN, WE BELIEVE, SUCH ORGANIZATIONS MAY BE BETTER PREPARED THAN INDIVIDUALS TO PROVIDE THE SUSTAINED SUPPORT AND ASSISTANCE NECESSARY TO FULLY INTEGRATE THE NEW ARRIVALS FROM INDOCHINA INTO AMERICAN SOCIETY.

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 STATE 168090

A NUMBER OF APPROACHES HAVE BEEN DEVELOPED TO EASE THE PROCESS OF RESETTLEMENT. ONE IS TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE TIME THAT REFUGEES SPEND IN RESETTLEMENT CENTERS TO PREPARE THEM FOR THE POSSIBLE TRAUMA OF MOVEMENT INTO AMERICAN COMMUNITIES.

HEW HAS SIGNED CONTRACTS WITH GOVERNMENTAL BOARDS OF EDUCATION AND PRIVATE EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS TO ESTABLISH ENGLISH LANGUAGE TRAINING PROGRAMS AT EACH OF THE FOUR RESETTLEMENT CENTERS IN THE U.S. ALL SITES NOW HAVE EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN OPERATION. THE CENTER FOR APPLIED LINGUISTICS IS, AT THE SAME TIME, DEVELOPING A CLEARING HOUSE OF RESOURCE MATERIALS TO ASSIST LOCAL

SCHOOLS FACED WITH THE PROBLEM OF HELPING STUDENTS WHO HAVE NOT YET MASTERED ENGLISH.

WE HAVE SET UP AN OFFICE TO PREPARE ORIENTATION

MATERIALS AND PROGRAMS FOR REFUGEES. BILINGUAL ORIENTATION HANDBOOKS HAVE BEEN DISTRIBUTED TO VIETNAMESE REFUGEES. A SIMILAR BOOK IN THE KHMER LANGUAGE IS NOW BEING PRINTED. SUPPLEMENTING OUR OWN WORK HAS BEEN A GREAT RESPONSE FROM VOLUNTARY GROUPS AND THE PRIVATE SECTOR. THE RED CROSS, FOR EXAMPLE, HAS DONATED PHRASE BOOKS AND DICTIONARIES; THE GOVERNORS' CONFERENCE, AND THE NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY HAVE DONATED MAPS OF THE UNITED STATES; AND SOME NATIONAL PERIODICALS HAVE PROVIDED COMPLIMENTARY SUBSCRIPTIONS TO THE REFUGEE CENTERS.

ONE OF THE MOST CRITICAL ELEMENTS OF AN EFFECTIVE RESETTLEMENT PROGRAM IS THE IDENTIFICATION OF JOBS AND JOB SKILLS. THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR IS DEVELOPING A COMPUTERIZED JOB MATCHING SYSTEM WHICH WE HOPE TO FIELD TEST SOON THROUGHOUT THE NORTHEAST USING THE RESETTLEMENT CAMP AT FORT INDIANTOWN GAP, PENNSYLVANIA AS A BASE OF OPERATIONS. THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR ALSO OFFERS INDIVIDUALIZED JOB COUNSELING IN THE CENTERS AND THROUGH ITS NETWORK OF EMPLOYMENT SERVICE OFFICES ACROSS THE NATION.

THE REFUGEES HAVE A WIDE RANGE OF SKILLS AND WE EXPECT THAT THEY WILL BE UTILIZED THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY IN UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 04 STATE 168090

VIRTUALLY EVERY SECTOR OF THE ECONOMY. INTERMS OF EMPLOYMENT NEEDS, WE REMAIN CONFIDENT THAT IT WILL BE POSSIBLE TO FIND JOBS FOR ABOUT 35,000 HEADS OF HOUSEHOLDS WITHOUT UNREASONABLE DELAYS.

ULTIMATELY, MRGM CAIRMAN, OUR CONCERN IS THAT SPONSORSHIP CAN ONLY BE CONSIDERED TRULY SUCCESSFUL IF IT LEADS TO THE FULL DEVELOPMENT OF THE POTENTIALS THE REFUGEES POSSESS TO CONTRIBUTE TO AMERICAN SOCIETY.

PROBLEMS HAVE ARISEN IN SOME INDIVIDUAL SPONSORSHIPS. OUR INVESTIGATIONS, HOWEVER, REVEAL THAT THE MOST SERIOUS CASES APPEAR TO INVOLVE REFUGEES WHO EITHER TRAVELED TO THE UNITED STATES ON THEIR OWN, SOMETIMES ON UNAUTHORIZED FLIGHTS, OR IN THE COMPANY OF RELATIVES AND FRIENDS WHO ARE AMERICAN CITIZENS OR PERMANENT RESIDENTS. MANY ARRIVED IN THE UNITED STATES BEFORE RIGOROUS SCREENING PROCEDURES WERE ESTABLISHED. OTHERS, ENTITLED TO ENTRY AS RELATIVES OF AMERICANS, BYPASSED THE SYSTEM.

AS ADMIRABLE AS ARE THE MOTIVES OF THESE AMERICANS,

MANY TOOK ON A BURDEN THEY LATER FOUND THEMSELVES UNABLE TO SUSTAIN. WE HAVE, THEREFORE, AUTHORIZED THE VOLUNTARY AGENCIES TO SEEK OUT SUCH SITUATIONS AND WE WILL REIMBURSE THE AGENCIES FOR COSTS INCURRED IN RESOLVING SUCH DIFFICULTIES ON THE SAME BASIS ON WHICH THEY HANDLE NEW SPONSORSHIPS.

ONE OF THE AIMS OF SPONSORSHIP IS TO AVOID HAVING THE REFUGEES REMAIN WARDS OF THE STATE FOR EXTENDED PERIODS. THE STATE OF WASHINGTON'S EXPERIMENTAL PROGRAM PROVIDES NEEDY REFUGEES WITH WELFARE BENEFITS FOR A LIMITED PERIOD DURING WHICH TIME EXTENSIVE EFFORTS ARE MADE TO HELP THEM BECOME SELF-SUPPORTING. WE HAVE ASKED STATES AND LOCALITIES TO PROVIDE US WITH A COMPREHENSIVE AND CURRENT LIST OF CASES WHERE REFUGEES ARE RECEIVING PUBLIC ASSISTANCE SO WE CAN SEE WHERE WE STAND IN THIS REGARD.

THE VOLUNTARY AGENCIES THEMSELVES REPORT A REMARKABLY UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 05 STATE 168090

LOW SPONSORSHIP BREAKDOWN RATE. THE PRIMARY REASON FOR THIS IS THAT LOCAL BRANCHES OF THESE VOLUNTARY AGENCIES DETECT AND RESOLVE DIFFICULTIES BEFORE THEY REACH CRISIS PROPORTIONS. WE CONTINUE TO ENCOURAGE SUCH INITIATIVE AND PROMPT ACTION BY LOCAL AGENCIES TO RESOLVE SPONSORSHIP DIFFICULTIES AND TO CURTAIL AND AMELIORATE THE HARDSHIPS SUFFERED BY THOSE INVOLVED.

WHILE MUST RECOGNIZE THE INEVITABILITY OF SOME DIFFICULTIES IN A PROGRAM OF THIS MAGNITUDE, WE CONTINUE TO SEEK AND IMPLEMENT WAYS TO MINIMIZE THEIR NUMBER AND MAGNITUDE.

I WOULD NOT BE CANDID, OR FOR THAT MATTER, CREDIBLE, IF I DID NOT SHARE WITH YOU OUR CONCERN OVER A NUMBER OF OTHER PROBLEMS WE FACE. THE CONFIDENCE I EXPRESSED EARLIER IN TH
<< END OF DOCUMENT >>

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